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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/662,266	09/15/2003	William H. Shepard	05918-212001 / 4470	9026
26161	7590	03/28/2006	EXAMINER	
FISH & RICHARDSON PC P.O. BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022			PASCUA, JES F	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3727		

DATE MAILED: 03/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/662,266	SHEPARD ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jes F. Pascua	3727	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 March 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 21-31 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 15 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/19/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group 1, claims 1-20, in the reply filed on 03/03/2006 is acknowledged.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the longitudinal side of the closure is attached to the bag body only outboard of the mating bands (claim 12) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New

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Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 12-14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 12, the structure of the closure has not been defined to warrant the language "one longitudinal side of the closure". Clarification is requested.

In claim 12, "the mating bands" lacks antecedence in the claim from which it depends.

In claim 14, "the fill opening" lacks antecedence.

In claim 18, "said one side of the fill opening" lacks antecedence.

In claim 18, "the fill opening lacks antecedence.

Claim 13 is rejected, since it depends from a claim rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-8, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 3-240651 to Yano (cited by applicant).

7. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 15, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 5-147661 to Watanabe.

8. Claims 1, 5, 8, 17, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by WIPO Publication No. WO 01/17864 A2 to Athans.

9. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 14, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,213,641 to Price.

10. Claims 1-8, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,481,183 to Schmidt.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yano, Watanabe, Athans or Schmidt and Price.

Yano, Watanabe, Athans and Schmidt each disclose the claimed invention except that each show the closure as mating male and female profiles instead of mating bands of hooks and hook-engageable fibers. Price shows that a closure sold under the trademark VELCRO is an equivalent structure known in the art. Therefore, because these two closure means were art-recognized equivalents at the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to substitute the mating male and female profiles of Yano, Watanabe, Athans or Schmidt for the VELCRO closure of Price. The VELCRO closure of Price is considered to meet the recitation of mating bands of hooks and hook-engageable fibers.

13. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe.

Watanabe discloses the claimed invention except for the flanges outboard of the closure having frangible tear line. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the flanges of the Watanabe bag with a frangible tear line since it was known in the art that frangible tear

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lines on flanges facilitate the removal of the flanges subsequent to welding them together.

Conclusion

14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jes F. Pascua whose telephone number is 571-272-4546. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thurs..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan J. Newhouse can be reached on 571-272-4544. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jes F. Pascua
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3727